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REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 are pending and claims 4-15 have been cancelled without prejudice pursuant to the previous restriction requirement.

No new matter has been added. In particular, amended claim 1 contains only limitations that were disclosed in the original specification.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Clusserath.

Claim 1 stands rejected under U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Garrett (2,638,259, the Examiner refers to this reference as "Robert").

Claim 3 stands rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clusserath.

Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garrett.

As amended, independent claim 1 requires:

1) (Currently Amended) A method of dispensing fluid substances into containers, characterized in that it comprises the steps of comprising:

directing a plurality of different fluid substances into respective compartments of a tank (7) affording respective different compartments (12, 13, 14, 15), each compartment isolated one from another and including equipped each with at least one filler valve (8);

replenishing each compartment the compartments (12, 13, 14, 15) of the tank (7) at least in part; and

dispensing a quantity of the fluid substance from a selected compartment (12, 13, 14, 15) of the tank (7) into a selected containersecontainer by way of the at least one filler valve (8);

draining off the respective fluid substance from one of the compartments of the tank;

cleaning the drained compartment with at least one flushing liquid;

discharging the flushing liquid from the cleaned compartment;

wherein the steps of draining off, cleaning, and discharging from the one compartment of the tank are done simultaneously with continuing the step of dispensing the respective fluid substance from any other compartment of the tank into the respective selected containers.

The claimed invention provides for the cleaning of one of the plurality of compartments (by draining off the respective fluid substance from one of the compartments of the tank; cleaning the drained compartment with at least one flushing liquid; and discharging the flushing liquid from the cleaned compartment) while simultaneously continuing production (filling containers) from at least one of the other of the plurality of compartments (by dispensing the respective fluid substance from any other compartment of the tank into the respective selected containers). See the present specification at page 7, lines 16-23 (emphasis added):

Employing the method disclosed, accordingly, it becomes possible to fill containers with different substances substantially at once, during the same production run of the filling machine, and therefore without having to suspend operations or carry out time-consuming and laborious cleaning procedures.

Likewise advantageously, a machine embodied in accordance with the present invention will allow one or more compartments to be flushed clean without interrupting the operation of filling containers from the remaining compartments, so that the production run can continue just the same, albeit with reduced output.

Neither Clusserath nor Garrett disclose or suggest draining off the respective fluid substance from one of the compartments of the tank; cleaning the drained compartment with at least one flushing liquid; and discharging the flushing liquid from the cleaned compartment, let alone, doing same at one compartment of the tank simultaneously with continuing the step of dispensing the respective fluid substance from any other compartment of the tank into the respective selected containers. There is simply no disclosure or suggestion in either reference as to cleaning one compartment of a multi-compartment tank at the same time that one of the other compartments continues production by filling containers with a respective fluid substance.

Further, since neither reference discloses or suggests these limitations of amended claim 1, even in combination, they fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of amended claim 1.

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These references, whether alone or in combination, simply do not teach or suggest, and cannot provide, the advantage of the claimed invention of "allow[ing] one or more compartments to be flushed clean without interrupting the operation of filling containers from the remaining compartments, so that the production run can continue just the same." (Specification, page 7, lines 20-23, emphasis added)

For these reasons, amended claim 1 is not anticipated nor rendered obvious by Clusserath or Garrett, whether alone or in combination.

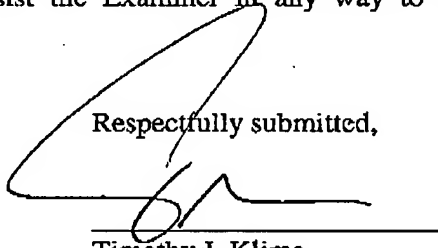
Claims 2 and 3 depend from amended claim 1, and are allowable for the same reasons as given with respect to amended claim 1.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests that the pending rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

All matters having been addressed above and in view of the pending claims and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Applicants' counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy J. Klima
Reg. No.: 34,852

Harbin King & Klima
500 Ninth Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202-543-6404
Fax: 202-543-6406